

GEORGIAN MARINE ECOLOGY AND FISHERIES RESEARCH INSTITUTE - LIBRARY/INSTITUTION REPORT

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The major changes started 12 years ago, since the break-up of the USSR.

The Institute was established in 1931 as a marine biological station. Until the late 80s it was the Georgian branch of Soviet Scientific Research institute of Fisheries and Oceanology (VNIRO) under Soviet Ministry of Fisheries. After the break-up of Soviet Union since 1991 the institute comes under the Ministry of Environment of Georgia as the Georgian Marine Ecology and Fisheries Institute. In 1994 at the institute, under the UNDP GEF funded Black Sea Environmental Programme (BSEP) the Black Sea Regional Activity Centre for Biodiversity Conservation was established.

Until 1990 during the Soviet time the Institute library, as the part of VNIRO, had direct connections with all other similar libraries and the exchange of information and Cupertino took place. The library used to be supplied with the annual "exchange fund directory" with all the references that could have been exchanged among the scientific-technical libraries according to the different fields. The priority aquatic areas for the institute/library were:

- Fisheries and aquaculture
- Hydrobiology
- Marine mammals
- Ecology-toxicology
- Seafood technology.

Since 1991 all the existing links have been broken, and the library has become somewhat isolated. The situation was worsened by the continuous economic difficulties in the country and under-financing of the institute from the government. During 1991-2000 the library did not significantly increase its book collections.

Some improvements in aquatic information provision occurred after the institute became involved in the Black Sea Environmental Programme. Under different phases of this programme, the institute has compiled and produced several publications, e.g. *The Black Sea Biodiversity Georgian National Report*, published in 1998 under the Black Sea Environmental Series by UN environmental publications; *The Biology and Status of the Black Sea Salmon (Salmo trutta labrax)*; *Black Sea Salmon Conservation Strategy*, produced in 2000 under the EU TACIS Black Sea Salmon Project, etc.

During 1999-2000 under the EU TACIS BSEP project Support to the Black Sea Regional Activity Centre for Biodiversity Conservation, the institute/library has received a limited amount (20 books) of various modern literature related to aquatic science and biodiversity, mostly identification guides. No technical maintenance support was provided.

Under the same EU TACIS programme the Institute had the opportunity to perform the seasonal marine and wetlands biodiversity surveys along the Georgian Black Sea coast, which has enabled the institute to collect up-to-date information for the last 10 years. Currently institute research staff are working on producing the biodiversity report, and the institute is seeking means to publish it.

The bibliography of Georgian Black Sea Biology publications (years 1929-1995; 452 items) was prepared in 1995 for inclusion into the 2nd volume of the Black Sea Bibliography, as a part of the Black Sea Environmental Series under BSEP. Eventually it was not published. The bibliography is now used internally in the Institute.

Under the EU TACIS the Institute has received small-scale publishing equipment (copying machines, thermo-binder etc.). Some publications have already been produced within the institute using this equipment.

We have recently applied to EURASLIC for associate membership.

The institute/library is the only one of this kind in the country. Being a scientific-technical one, the library is relatively small sized. There are 7214 books, not including journals and articles. The library is served by one staff-librarian. The library also has an archive of all the scientific articles and reports produced within the institute since 1956. The earlier materials (1931-1856) are kept in the central archive of the town.

The resources of the library are used not only by the institute personnel, but the Batumi State University (Biology, Water Bio-resources Department) and Tbilisi State University (Hydrobiology and Water Eco-toxicology department).

Current Needs

1. Supply of up-to-date professional-aquatic information, as well as modern methodology and instructions regarding library management.
2. Equipment and means for establishment of an electronic cataloguing system.
3. Membership in professional bodies.